

Amateurs in Action

Recounts of ham radio operators who have used their time and skills to help others in a time of need



Alberta rescue

It was 28 September 2002, and Gered May of Drayton Valley, Alberta, Canada, was enjoying a nice, early-autumn Saturday out near [Peppers Lake](#), riding on his ATV, when he crashed and broke his leg and collarbone, and dislocated his elbow. It wasn't long before Dave Lajeunesse VE6DRD of Red Deer, riding with other members of the [Highriders Four Wheel Drive Club](#), encountered Gered and immediately attempted a call to 911.



Dave Lajeunesse VE6DRD

As soon as he realized they were outside of cell tower range, Dave picked up the microphone to his 2-meter mobile radio, an [ADI AR-147](#) attached a 5/8-wave whip, and made contact with one of the repeaters in the Central Alberta Radio League system. On the other end were members of the Red Deer ARES group, who soon engaged the Rocky Mountain House dispatchers and the helicopter medivac pilots. *Other members of the Four Wheel Drive group provided on-scene first aid, marked a helicopter landing zone near the injured patient, and sent guide vehicles to the nearest road to meet [RCMP](#) and EMS ground vehicles.*



Highrider members Kevin Hennel VA6CDN and Steven Booth VA6AMC provided GPS coordinates to Dave, who relayed the location information directly to the [STARS ambulance helicopter](#) pilots. *Within two hours of the first call, the patient was stabilized, extracted from the remote accident scene, and airlifted to surgery.*

About his experience helping Gered, Dave said, *I understood and appreciated the incredible capabilities this system has out in the back country and how it could save someone*

or myself in such things as breakdowns, or injuries. I felt communication was vital when you are potentially so far from any main roads and a problem arises. In combination with a GPS, someone can always find you! So I haven't really

had a lot of experience talking, just a little here and there. I have never made an emergency call before, and from my experience last weekend I have learned a great deal. Last heard, Gered was making a full recovery.

You can read more details about this rescue on the [Central Alberta Amateur Radio Club website](#). (Sorry for the small and grainy photos; they were the best I could find.)



Highriders carrying Gered